

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Historic November Dates

November dates pertaining to great historical events in the history of Monterey are most interesting, probably the most important are from 1540 through the early 1800s.

Capt. Pedro Fages, who came West with Portola and Father Serra, with six soldiers and a muleteer, left Monterey Nov. 21, 1770, on an exploration expedition that led him through the Santa Clara Valley, up the eastern Bay to the vicinity of the present city of Alameda and back to Monterey, where he arrived Dec. 4th. Fages' journey was the first inland exploration undertaken from Monterey.

Twenty-two years later, on Nov. 14, 1792. Capt. George Vancouver, distinguished English explorer, commanding the sloop-of-war "Discovery," arrived at San Francisco on the first of three visits to California. He stayed at San Francisco for 11 days, then proceeded to Monterey, where he remained until Jan. 14, 1793. On his second visit, Vancouver arrived in San Francisco on Oct. 19, 1793, stayed five days then continued on to Monterey where he also stayed five days; he then proceeded down the coast. His third visit to Monterey was made Nov.6,1794.

Hypolyte Bouchard, commanding a French privateer carrying the revolutionary flag of Buenos Aires, with two frigates, the Argentina or "La Gentila' and Santa Rosa, or "Libertad," anchored at Monterey Nov. 20, 1818. Bouchard attacked the port on the 21st; landed and captured the town on the 22nd; and departed after looting it on the 26th.

After the arrival on Sept; 26, 1822, of Agustin Fernandez de San Vicente, representing the Mexican Emperor Iturbide, in Monterey to proclaim California a province of independent Mexico and establish a new Mexican government, the first "diputacion" or provincial legislature in California was elected and installed at Monterey on Nov. 9, 1822.

Capt. Luis Arguello, was elected governor of California to succeed Pablo Vicente Sola, on Nov. 22, 1822. The Arguello name still is famous in California and his descendants are some of the most prominent citizens of the state.

Capt. Frederick William Beechy, R.N., in H.M.S Blossom, touched at Monterey in January 1826, and again in October 1827, remaining here until the following January. The chronicle of the journey is contained in his "Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Bering Strait," published in 1831 in London.

It must have been an exciting time when, on Nov. 12, 1829, a group of dissatisfied soldiers rebelled, seized Monterey, and chose Joaquin Solis as leader, revolting against Mexican administration in California. The revolt was broken when forces of Gov. Jose Maria de Echeandia recaptured Monterey on Jan. 20, 1830.

Another turbulent day in Monterey was Nov. 3, 1836, when Don Juan Bautista Alvarado and Jose Castro, with 100 Spanish Californians, led a revolt here against Gov. Nicolas Gutierrez. The revolt was instigated by opposition to the Mexican practice of sending Mexicans to rule California, when many Californians were capable leaders.

Monterey capitulated and Gutierrez surrendered Nov. 5, fleeing to Cape San Lucas. Castro occupied the office of "comandante-general" until Nov.29, being succeeded by Alvarado as governor.

Still another important event occurred Nov. 8, 1836, when a territorial "diputacion" (assembly) of California adopted a declaration of independence from Mexico. The territory, it was declared, was to be known as "the free and sovereign State of California." In the partition, engineered by Gov. Anastasio Bustamante as constitutional president of Mexico, Alvarado performed an about face and again brought California back into the republic of a "department." He became governor on Dec. 7, 1836.